

Montgomery County Council Grants Advisory Group Report

FY11 Review of Council Grant Applications

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April 23, 2010

FY 11 Grants Advisory Group Members

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For FY11, the Grants Advisory Group reviewed a total of 196 applications from 143 different organizations totaling \$10,845,130.

By comparison the FY10 Grants Advisory Group reviewed a total of 197 applications from 148 different organizations totaling \$11,724,517.

On October 13, 2009, the Montgomery County Council adopted Resolution #16-1145 which established an application and review process for funding requests from non-profit agencies for FY2011. This resolution is attached as *Appendix 1* (©A1-A3).

In addition, for FY11 the Council indicated that it “is particularly interested in proposals that provide emergency and other assistance to the neediest members of our community.” The FY11 Council Grant Application and supporting materials noted this Council priority for FY11 (see *Appendix 2* ©A4-A14).

As part of the FY11 grants process the Council appointed a Grants Advisory Group to review applications and provide evaluative comments on the proposals. This is the final report of the Grants Advisory Group to the Council, and completes the Group’s work for this fiscal year.

The Council appointed 21 members to the Grants Advisory Group. The Grants Advisory Group met a total of eight times between February 3 and April 12. Three of the meetings were of the full Grants Advisory Group and five meetings were in smaller teams of members. For the grants submitted to the Council, staff organized the Grants Advisory Group into 9 Teams with each team reviewing similar applications. Each team had two members of the Grants Advisory Group. During the month of March each grant applicant was invited to attend a brief Question and Answer session with the Grants Advisory Group team reviewing their application. Almost all applicants accepted this invitation. In addition, a separate team reviewed the County Executive-recommended Community Grants that were not previously submitted to the Council and which did not go through a competitive process in the Executive Branch. Because of the constrained time frame for review of these Executive-recommended grants, the Grants Advisory Group was not able to have Q&A sessions with these applicants.

Collectively, the Grants Advisory Group spent over 100 hours in meetings with applicants and in reviewing applications, plus approximately an equal amount of time reviewing applications individually.

Applications have been identified according to the following categories: (Large Capital: \$50,000 or greater; Small Capital: less than \$50,000; and operating support for organizations incorporated prior to/in or after year 2002)

Applications have also been identified according to program area:

- Basic needs/Emergency services/ Housing-related services/ Legal services;
- Community Development and Economic Development;
- Health and Behavioral Health;
- Services to Children and Families;
- Services to Older Adults and People with Disabilities;
- Youth Development

The summary table in the next section reflects program designations. The attached summary spreadsheet reflects the program, category, description of project, and funding requested. Those grants recommended for full funding by the Executive are noted in **bold**; those recommended for partial funding are identified in *italics* with the amount recommended by the Executive in the CE column. An asterisk beside the name of the organization denotes an application submitted to the Council that was a duplicate of an application to one of two County Government competitive grant programs: Community Development Block Grant or Community Service Grant.

I. Summary Information and Tables and Summary Worksheet

The attached summary spreadsheet beginning on ©1B has three parts:

1. **Council grant applications reviewed by the Grants Advisory Group.** The summary spreadsheet for these applications begins on ©1B. Evaluative comments for these applications begin on ©1. (As noted previously, on the spreadsheet those recommended for full funding by the Executive are noted in **bold**; those recommended for partial funding are identified in *italics* with the amount recommended by the Executive in the CE column)
2. **Executive-recommended Community Grants not previously submitted to the Council and reviewed by the Grants Advisory Group.** The Grants Advisory Group also reviewed 22 Executive-recommended Community Grants not previously submitted to the Council. The summary spreadsheet for these 22 grants not previously submitted to the Council begins on ©10B. Evaluative comments for all grant applications reviewed by the Grants Advisory Group, including these grants, are listed alphabetically beginning on ©1.

The Executive recommended a total of 70 discretionary Community Grants in the Community Grants Non-Departmental Account, plus four more that are contained in the capital budget. (These figures do not include Arts and Humanities Grants) For a complete listing of all Executive-recommended discretionary Community Grants, and competitive Community Service Grants and Community Development Block Grants, see *Appendix 3* ©A15-18.

3. **Council Grant Requests not reviewed by the Grants Advisory Group.** These requests include those received at the Council but reviewed by the Arts and Humanities Council and/or Council Committees, two grants recommended for partial funding by the Executive that underwent a competitive process in the Executive Branch and for which the applicant is not requesting additional funding: Community Development Block Grants and Community Service Grants, and two applications that were withdrawn (©12B). There are no corresponding evaluative comments for these grants.

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Program Areas

The Council directed that grant applications should be sorted according to the program area of the application. Staff sorted the applications into the following program areas: basic needs/ emergency services/ housing-related services/legal services; community development and economic development; health and behavioral health; services to children and families; services to older adults and people with disabilities; and youth development.

The table below shows the number of applications in each program area and the total amount of requested funding in each program area.

Table 1: Program Areas

| Program Area | Number of Applications | % | Total Amount | % |
|---|------------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Basic Needs/ emergency Svs./ Housing related Svs. | 60 | 31% | \$ 2,770,810 | 25% |
| Community & Economic Development | 31 | 16% | \$ 2,361,070 | 22% |
| Health/ Behavioral Health | 15 | 8% | \$ 797,770 | 7% |
| Svs. to Children and Families | 11 | 6% | \$ 751,110 | 7% |
| Svs. to Older Adults/ People with Disabilities | 26 | 13% | \$ 1,208,850 | 11% |
| Youth Development | 46 | 23% | \$ 2,480,990 | 23% |
| Other | 7 | 4% | \$ 474,530 | 4% |
| Total: | 196 | 100%* | \$10,845,130 | 100%* |

For Table 1, the “Other” category refers to applications that did not fall into one of the identified program areas. They were for security, animal care, military-related, or nonprofit capacity building requests. (Percentages do not total 100 due to rounding).

II. Evaluative Comments

The Grants Advisory Group compiled one-page summaries of evaluative comments for each application reviewed. The summaries are attached on ©1-©195. As directed by the

Council, the report of the Grants Advisory Group does not rank, score, or tier the applications. As previously noted, on the summary spreadsheet those grants recommended for full funding by the Executive are noted in **bold**; those recommended for partial funding are identified in *italics* with the amount recommended by the Executive in the CE column. An asterisk beside the name of the organization denotes an application submitted to the Council that was a duplicate of an application to one of two County Government competitive grant programs: Community Development Block Grant or Community Service Grant.

The group evaluated each application on the following criteria established by the Council:

Cost-benefit analysis

- a. What is the per unit cost of the service or activity?
- b. What is the impact on the recipient relative to the cost?

Public benefit

- a. Is the need clearly identified and demonstrated?
- b. Is the target population clearly described and well served by this proposal?
- c. Is there justification for the program?

Strength of organization

- a. How long have these services been delivered by this agency and for how long has this program been receiving public funds?
- b. What is the number of volunteers and staff involved in the program? Does the proposal describe principal staff assigned to the program and their qualifications? Do they have experience and expertise relative to the proposed project?
- c. What other partner organizations is the applicant working with to address the needs of those served?
- d. Has the organization leveraged other non-county government funding for the proposal or other programs?
- e. Based on the budgetary information, does the organization have the capacity to carry out the proposed program?

Strength of proposal

- a. Does the proposal clearly describe what the project proposes to do and what recipients will get out of it?
- b. Does it reflect an understanding of potential barriers to effective implementation of the program and the plan to address the barriers?
- c. Does the proposal outline the anticipated outcomes of the program and are the outcomes measurable and relevant?
- d. Does the proposal discuss the activities and timeline to achieve the anticipated outcome?
- e. If the proposal requests funds for an existing program, does it describe the results/outcomes achieved to date? Evaluate the results achieved to date.
- f. If the proposal requests funds for a new program, does it provide information on success of program in other jurisdictions, evidence of best practices, etc.?

- g. Are there specific plans for integration/coordination with other existing nonprofit organizations and County services?
- h. Does the proposal contain a sufficiently detailed program budget to be able to assess
- i. Does the proposal address plans for continuing support after the grant ends and the availability of other resources?
- j. Are there any major concerns with the budget?

III. Appendices

The following documents are attached for reference and review:

- Appendix 1: Resolution # 16-1145, Establishing FY2011 Community Grant process (©A1-A3)
- Appendix 2: Council FY11 grant application form and instructions (©A4-A14)
- Appendix 3: Complete list of Executive-recommended Community Grants and competitive Community Service Grants and Community Development Block Grants (©A15-A18)